Introductions/Activity
Each LC member introduced themselves and answered the following question: On this day in 1908, the forty-sixth star is added to the U.S. flag, signifying Oklahoma's admission to statehood. If you had to choose a state to live in, other than Nebraska, which state would it be and why?

Purpose of Day One is to Review and Evaluate past LC activities

Session One (10:30-12:00)
New members were welcomed. LC is to develop, monitor, and revise agency visions and goals, and to provide for input and direction on actualization of agency values and principles.

Review of the past work of the VR LC since its inception:
LC members were asked to identify the meaningful activities and outcomes.

LC Comments:
• Personal notes from Mark
• Flexibility of hours (4-10's, 4-9's + 4)
• An LC member mentioned that there are several teams in their building. The LC members met with all the teams as a group after LC meetings which was very beneficial. Teams are now working closer together.
• More team building in the teams.
• LC member taking info back to the team so the team felt they were more connected (especially when HR attended last year)
• Beneficial to hear what other teams are doing across the state; teams may be doing something a different way than what another team is doing so it's great to brainstorm and talk about various ways of serving clients
• Teams have cross-team collaboration now after the LC was formed
• Staff's voices are important. All team members were able to contribute through the LC members who take the information back to the LC meetings.
• LC members take back info to the teams, then team members were asked for input which was very helpful. Team tour then was a time to talk about the information. Asking and getting comments from staff was important.
• Talking about rewards with teams varied from team to team.
• To see something come out of the LC was very beneficial; staff thought LC was just going to be another activity but outcomes have actually happened from LC.
• Staff weren't interested in input at the beginning but as the process went along, LC member was able to get more input from staff. Staff saw results.

Mark: Biggest thing is the development of the values, principles, actualization statements and incorporating them into the performance appraisals. All of LC took control of that process and you worked it out in a very professional manner and you model this in your work through individual and team work.

What happened over the past year and were the most value to you as part of this process?

LC Comments:
• Information processing style (Mark found that VR LC members process information by storytelling, visual)
• Graphical depiction of mission
• Flexible schedule
• Vision for branding (how VR is to look in 15 years)
• FedEx Days
• MyVR (app for Smartphones which would connect to QE2 case management system); VR has received a $50,000 grant for that; $$$ will go to clients to help pilot MyVR
• Teambuilding was a team's FedEx day idea and it helped the team with communication
• Blurring boundary lines for where clients are served by offices
• Tuition assistance (a staff member also benefited from getting time for taking class)
• LC did develop purpose statement, mission statement, values (respect, integrity, leadership), guiding principles, actualization statements; these are incorporated into evaluations
• Rewards: Training – frontline staff being able to attend conferences, trainings
• State Staff and having presenters from VR
• VR LC has given team members "a voice"
• Expanding Jeans Days (being able to wear to State Staff was very important)

• when LC were given rationale (from HR) why some things can be done and some things can't be done was very helpful

Group questions (groups based on East/Mid/West states):
What was most important outcome of those previously listed and why? What problem did it resolve?

LC Comments (4 groups reported):
•• Developing purpose statement, values, mission. All activities were developed from that. Staff voices are equally important. Staff input and buy-in were necessary for the development of the values, mission and vision to be successful. Gave a clear purpose and direction. We see this as continuing to evolve which helps us to be responsive to change. Provides consistency for offices across the state. Also resolved some inequities for example with interpreting flex time.

•• Toss-up between developing values, mission, vision vs. motivational factors. Developing values, mission, values were very important. Morale improved. Staff retention hopefully will improve. New appreciation for developing processes — long time staffers didn't have buy-in for LC at the beginning but now are involved. New staffers are getting to know LC members and know how the VR LC is instrumental in developing processes. They are motivated to be involved.

•• Developing values, missions, vision – everything came down from that. Direction was clarified and VR is able to move forward from there. Everyone was given a voice. Team building and connectivity has improved. It is beneficial to have everyone together and do things together especially if team members are housed in various locations.

•• Looked at some of the same as others but settled on flex scheduling. Flex scheduling seems to affect most people. Seems to speak to the values, mission, vision, autonomy, motivation. Proof that staff do have a voice and a choice. Reconfirms we are trusted as employees. Exempt/non-exempt fine-line kind of faded. More client-centered because staff can adjust their schedules to meet client schedules.

LUNCH 12:00-1:00

Session Two (1:00-2:30)
Evaluation of Progress on Motivational Factors (Dan Pink, *Drive*)
Lives Worth Living: DVD by PBS re: disability rights movement.

LC Comments about the DVD:
DVD was powerful for role models for vision, mission, values that we fight for everyday. Little girl who got to the top of the Capitol spoke volumes. Clients want a purpose and want to contribute in life. We all have disabilities and abilities. Inspirational for what VR does. Shall we use the DVD in NST? LC thought it would be good. It would breed empathy.

Discussion
Purpose, Values and Guiding Principles
Review/any changes: Still work?

LC Comments:
•• Purpose: One group was fine except for use of the word "disabilities." SRC wanted the word "disabilities" to stay in the Purpose. Same discussion is going on nationally with the wording "people with disabilities." Purpose must coincide with acting legislation. There are some people that have conditions/issues that don't know that VR does serve people with those conditions/issues. "Issues" may be a safer word. Wording on a postcard we have, "Do you have a friend or relative who is not working or having difficulty working because of physical, emotional, or learning issues?" is helpful to people who may not know they can get services. Disability means something different to everyone. Success stories are a good way to get the word out that we provide

assistance. Would it be a good idea to use wording that is used with a certain kind of situation, e.g., use wording like an ENT would use in an ENT office.

•• Like Mission, Values, etc. We have dual-clients: clients and businesses. Businesses need to be stressed as well as clients. Marketing is working on that.

•• Had some thoughts about changing the wording "disabilities." Under leadership where it talks about inspiring hope in those we serve, we were talking about encouraging clients to be leaders themselves (which would help boost their self confidence) with certain things being more client-directed such as things like "MyVR".

•• Leadership portion: seems to be staff focused. Is "inspire" a good word? Add "with staff and clients" after "and teamwork."

•• Bring purpose/mission/principles to the table in team meetings.

•• Client vs. Consumer — client is the word we use. SRC chose "client" to be used.

Session Three (2:30-3:00)
Autonomy

Everybody pretty much thought they had autonomy in their jobs. Flex scheduling, 4 day work week. Not much more that we could do. LC meetings hopefully will bring about autonomy as you take it back to your teams.

Break (3:00-3:15)

Session Four (3:15-3:30)
Mastery — (the desire to continually improve on something that matters)

We haven't completed simplification of policies. We could improve skills if policies were simplified and easy to find. This process isn't as easy as we thought it would be. Pat is in the process of rewriting VRIS; did outline on policy based on process. We will do statewide training when it is done.

Training workgroup was a result of info from LC. How to make a decision on what training to attend should be finalized soon so it is consistent across the state. Mentoring program is also part of that. What about a library of videos at SO to check out or watch via v/c? Have teams talked about Strengthsfinders so that we know where staff's strengths are to better the team? We have new staff but do we know their strengths? One team has skill building around Strengthsfinders. One team used Strengthsfinders at FedEx Days. Teambuilding: shadow a co-worker, lunch together, had 2 hour teambuilding talking about our strengths. Drop In A Bucket — tell a staff member what they have done good with client/co-worker; have electronic link to Drop In A Bucket.

Are staff using LINK for staff training? VR staff are not using it. VR creates training for needs we hear about. LINK trainings are pretty general.

If we do a better job of giving training, staff will attend. We didn't get commitment on Bridges Out of Poverty; have taken concepts and applied some. MI was a major change

in how we do business; we will continue with this. Strengthsfinders was here when Mark started; left it to be used by the team on a team-by-team usage.

Session Five (3:30-finish)
Motivation/Rewards (incentives)
Incentives-what things should be rewarded?

LC Comments (4 groups reported):

Expansion of Jeans Days:
•• If short week— don't work on Friday, wear jeans on Thurs; wear on birthday; severe weather day; short Thanksgiving week, State Staff (it was wonderful to wear at State Staff)
•• Varying opinions in the group: each office has varying culture (some staff in schools dress professionally but some don't and it depends on where you might be in the state of how school staff dress); OD varies on thoughts (group doesn't want to abuse the jean policy and wearing jeans is tough to standardize; should be no holes/tears)
•• Severe weather; birthday; between Christmas and New Year's; discretion of ODs; FedEx Days; all staff meeting day; meeting team goal (i.e., meet goal in October, wear jeans in Oct.)
•• Could expand jeans day but will lose reward-factor; could expand to snow days; LC meetings

LC Comments on Other Incentives (4 groups reported):

•• If there is training that staff want to attend, not job-related, we would have the opportunity to have the time off to take the class, but the staff member would pay for it. Tuition assistance — Currently we receive assistance with 7 credit hours a year, which is great. However, most graduate programs require anywhere from 17-20 classes (3 credit hours each, for a total of 51-60 credit hours) and give you 7 years to complete the program. Since the 7 hours we get a year is 2 classes, it would be nice to see this number increase, allowing VR staff to receive assistance for more than 2 classes a year. Maybe this number could be 9 or 12 credit hours a year (3-4 classes)? Most people complete their degrees in 2-4 years.
Support CRC
Merit stipends – if available, remind ODs about it; and put into evaluations
Rewarded for innovative ideas
Rewarded for new referral source development
Option to work on holidays and bank the hours to use some other time
Husker ticket discounts
Some teams were not recognized at SS for meeting team goals so teams were frustrated
Group trivia winners were rewarded with a week-long wearing of jeans – that didn't really seem right.

•• LC sometimes focus on themselves but we should focus on clients. Imbalance of what we do for ourselves vs. what we do for clients. We should be focusing on the client. Is it about jeans? It should be about clients. We should be rewarded for bringing in referrals, placements, employer partnerships … that which is client-based. Communication/consistency/respect. Treatment. Not materialistic. Should we move quicker?

I hope what we do has trickle down effect, feel better about myself when I treat others with respect, etc.

People are motivated by many factors. What motivates one staff member doesn't necessarily motivate others.

•• Time off to volunteer in community

Logo shirts – VR could furnish the 1st one, staff buy after that

Ability to purchase State Surplus items before auction

Floating holiday when there is a week with a holiday

Bank vacation hours so you don't lose at the end of the year (and then donate them to whomever whenever)

•• Working from home

chair massages

gym memberships along with wellness program

eliminate going back on probation with a promotion (not given raise because on probation)

tuition for staff – a staff member took a class at CCC; told later it was a training so not paid for (need more information on what tuition assistance covers)

policies – do staff really know about policies and could it be v/c topic (tuition could be a topic); topics are discussed with supervisors and it seems to be filtered from supervisors to staff; LC should share information with staff as well as LC members should share information with other LC members

working from home (weather-related — guidelines on that); staff have iPads now – is there a way to work from home? (Management is looking at that right now; how do you measure that work is being done? Maybe role/team decision. Need to have a structure around it) (Yahoo just pulled working from home because staff weren't feeling connectivity and they were feeling like an island. Fremont VR felt a lack of connectivity when staff had no office and were working from home.)

Accountability: Some staff aren't being held accountable and if staff were being held accountable, then there would be more camaraderie. Staff should hold themselves accountable. Communication is being worked on.

DAY TWO (begin at 8:30)
Purpose of Day Two is to identify issues and define a process for prioritizing issues of the agency requiring the attention of the Leadership Council. Bottom UP.

Session Six (8:45-10:00)
Small Group discussion
What are the issues of the day for the VR LC? How should we identify issues?

What should our priorities be for the next year? What criteria should be used to prioritize issues?

LC Comments (4 groups reported):
•• Need for more referral sources
Conflicts between Placement staff and counselor
Transition services – writing appropriate or realistic plans; getting signatures from guardians or parents
•accountability between associates (in one office)
• Accountability — fine line. Generalization was accountability for staff. Lack of equity. Don't worry about what others do. However when something affects how services are provided to clients, we must be aware of what all are doing as the end result should be employment for the client. If we work in teams, it does matter what others are doing. All staff should work together in a timely fashion for the client. If a client is adversely affected, then that is a problem. Kindergarten strategy - - blanket email doesn't make the problem go away.
•• Discrimination from staff on who they work with, i.e., clients who have a criminal history or hearing impairments.
•• Turnover issues in offices
•• Accountability on what others are doing; work should be focused on clients. We should appreciate others as individuals. Maybe staff doing something together is a good thing as you see team members in a different light. Brand new staff vs. seasoned staff — I want to do something more than at work. If we come to the agency as a new staff member, why should we have to do things just because it was done that way in the past? A staff member came here because "innovative agency" was in the job description. Change is hard but it is good. Change will get us to where we need to be.
•• A staff member who is new felt like sometimes when she sees a seasoned staff member as unhappy, the new staff member wondered, "Do I want to work here?" (Both seasoned and new keep the dynamics going.

BREAK 10:00-10:15

Session Seven (10:15-Noon)

Defining the Problem and Identifying the Causes (Ishikawa diagram)

The problems stated by LC members may not necessarily be the problem. Mark showed 3 YouTube videos as a lead-in to give staff a tool that could break down what the real issue is. Following are the YouTube videos:

http://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=related&v=FXjLeFQFPAQ (5 why's intro)
http://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=relmfu&v=mfHy6_-vDAc (fish diagram)
http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=U3w_eIa7Eq0&feature=related (father/daughter whys)

Took one of the issues and diagrammed it — cause/effect of a problem. Diagramming is to get to the root cause of a problem. Keep the cause simple. Ask "why?" to get to the root of the issues. There are many causes (e.g., agency priority, referral sources, marketing) to the problem "not enough quality referrals."

Issue: Not enough "quality" referrals (see attached diagram)

Not getting enough quality referrals because of marketing; because people don't know we exist because we are not using the right tools or strategies; because people don't understand what we do because our materials aren't taking into account information processing styles; people don't see themselves as having a disability; because we don't track information to see if we are having success.

Not getting enough quality referrals because it is not agency priority because staff don't have enough staff time, staff training (on developing quality referrals), staff marketing, because there is no money allocated in the budget.

Not getting enough quality referrals because referral sources are not a match, because referrals don't understand what appropriate referrals are, we aren't getting the correct messages out

CHARGE FOR NEXT TIME:
At least one month prior to next VR LC meeting, work with your team to identify and **prioritize** (we will look at the top 5) any issues to bring forward to the LC for discussion and problem-solving. We will prioritize and we will take the fish model to start to look at the causes of those problems. Submit to VR LC Wiki.